

Message Text

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11

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2485

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 0811

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ES, HO

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER OUTLINES HIS STRATEGY FOR SETTLEMENT
WITH EL SALVADOR

1. IN THE COURSE OF A VISIT I MADE TO THE FONMIN IN CONNECTION
WITH THE FORTHCOMING VISIT TO CENTRAL AMERICA OF THE SECRETARY
OF STATE, THE CONVERSATION TURNED TO THE EFFORT NOW UNDERWAY
TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HONDURAS
AND EL SALVADOR. PERDOMO UNFOLDED TO ME HIS STRATEGY FOR THESE
NEGOTIATIONS FOR WHICH HE CLAIMS TO HAVE FULL CABINET SUPPORT.
HE SAID THAT IN HIS OPINION THE WORDS "GLOBAL" AND "SIMULTANEOUS"
WERE TOO RESTRICTIVE AND THAT HE AND GOES FONMIN BORGONOV
WERE FAIRLY WELL AGREED THAT PROPER SEQUENCE FOR IRONING OUT
DIFFERENCES COULD BE DEVELOPED WITHOUT ALLOWING TOO MUCH TIME
TO LAPSE BETWEEN EACH ITEM. HE SAID THAT WITHIN A WEEK A
MEETING WOULD TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THE TWO CHIEFS OF STATE,
PROBABLY ALONG THE BORDER. FONMIN PERDOMO AND BORGONOV
WILL BE FOLLOWING UP WITH AN EARLY MEETING ON THE BORDER
QUESTION, THE MATTER OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, AND THE
MATTER OF THE PAN AMERICAN HIGHWAY.

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2. PERDOMO REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES HIS GREAT PLEASURE

AT THE INITIATIVE TAKEN BY GORGONOVO TO COME TO HONDURAS EVEN IF FOR A BRIEF WHILE (COMMENT: I WAS UNABLE TO TELL WHETHER OR NOT HE WAS SINCERELY PLEASED AT THE RESULTS OF BORGONOVO'S VISIT, OR IF HE WAS MERELY TRYING TO CONCEAL HIS CONCERN OVER THE CRITICISM WHICH BORGONOVO'S MOVE HAS ELICITED FROM SOME HONDURAN CIRCLES).

3. PERDOMO SAID THAT ONE OF THE PRIME FACTORS FOR SUCCESS OF THE NEW NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE THE QUALITY OF THE NEGOTIATING TEAM. HE POINTED OUT HIS PLEASURE AT HAVING ENLISTED THE SERVICES OF ROBERTO RAMIREZ, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT. ROBERTO RAMIREZ, ACCORDING TO PERDOMO, POSSESSES A KEEN LEGAL MIND AND IS AN ACKNOWLEDGED EXPERT ON THE SUBJECT MATTER TO BE NEGOTIATED. (COMMENT: WHILE THIS MAY BE TRUE, THE EXCLUSION OF CESAR BATRES FROM THE NEGOTIATING TEAM HAS CREATED SOME CONCERN AMONG SOME OF THE HONDURAN LEADERSHIP. THIS INCLUDES MANUEL GAMERO, PRESTIGIOUS PUBLISHER OF TIEMPO. IT PROBABLY INCLUDES BATRES HIMSELF).

4. THE GOH FONMIN SAID THAT ENGINEERS ARE WORKING NOW TO DEFINE AND MAP OUT THAT PORTION OF THE BORDER NOT IN DISPUTE. ACCORDING TO PERDOMO, THIS IS ABOUT 70 PCT OF THE BORDER. NEGOTIATIONS WILL THEN PROCEED ON THE BALANCE. AN ANNOUNCEMENT WILL THEN BE MADE THAT VIRTUAL AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON THE BORDER QUESTION AND THAT THE MECHANISM HAS BEEN PUT INTO PLAY TO RESOLVE THE RELATIVELY SMALL POCKETS IN DISPUTE. AT THE SAME TIME, IT WOULD BE A SIGNAL FOR THE REOPENING OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HOWEVER, THERE WOULD BE NO IMMEDIATE EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS SINCE PERDOMO FEELS FOR THE TIME BEING ANY SALVADORAN AMBASSADOR WOULD HAVE TO BE HEAVILY GUARDED AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF ACTION BY EXTREMISTS. THIS, THEN, COULD BE FOLLOWED BY THE REOPENING OF THE HIGHWAY TO TRANSIT. (COMMENT: THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE MORNING PERDOMO SEEMED TO BE OBLIVIOUS OF CRITICISM HE IS RECEIVING FOR ALLEGEDLY OPERATING UNDER TOO MUCH SECRECY, MOVING TOO RAPIDLY. HIS STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH, MOREOVER, RUNS COUNTER TO THE VIEWS OF IMPORTANT SECTORS HERE WHO STILL INSIST UPON A "GLOBAL AND SIMULTANEOUS" SETTLEMENT).

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5. FINALLY, PERDOMO ADDED THAT HE HAD DEVELOPED A GREAT DEAL OF RESPECT FOR FONMIN BORGONOVO. HE SAID HE FELT BORGONOVO ALWAYS ATTEMPTED TO DEAL CANDIDLY, OPENLY AND REALISTICALLY.

SANCHEZ

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